



*Enriching Our Native Way of Life*

March 26, 2014

Mr. Dennis McLerran  
Region 10 Administrator  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 Sixth Avenue, Suite 900  
Seattle, WA 98101

Dear Regional Administrator McLerran,

Bristol Bay Native Corporation (BBNC) writes to strongly urge the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to move forward efficiently and quickly with the 404(c) process as outlined in your February 28, 2014, letter to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), the State of Alaska, and the Pebble Limited Partnership (PLP). Our Corporation, shareholders and the people of Bristol Bay would like to see EPA issue a Final Determination before the end of 2014. The specter of the proposed Pebble mine has been hanging over our communities and lives for the past decade. We need that to end. We want the 404(c) process to lead to practical restrictions on the development of the proposed Pebble mine that protect the water quality of the region and its world class fisheries. We need EPA to finalize its action this year.

Accompanying this letter is a timeline outlining the chronology of delays and uncertainty our shareholders and other Bristol Bay residents have faced over the last ten years as PLP has time and time again failed to deliver on promises that it would complete its mining plans and start applying for permits. PLP's actions have caused significant harm, including promoting uncertainty that has impacted the marketability of the fishery, hindered our fishing families as they have tried to make rational investment decisions in their businesses, and forced our younger generations—who might be contemplating becoming fishermen—to consider other career paths. This uncertainty has also damaged the social fabric of our region, including subsistence, through the stress of having the threat of massive chronic and acute pollution from the proposed Pebble mine continue indefinitely. Simply put, Bristol Bay residents need closure.

BBNC appreciates that EPA has begun the 404(c) process and is currently engaged with the Corps, State of Alaska and PLP in a consultation period that will run through April. Once that period ends, we ask that the agency promptly publish a Proposed Determination and hold public hearings in the Bristol Bay region before June 10<sup>th</sup> when most residents must turn their attention to the upcoming fishing season. Adherence to this schedule will keep EPA on track to have a final consultation with the Corps, State of Alaska and PLP later this year, and issue a Final Determination before the end of 2014.

Our shareholders and other Bristol Bay residents have endured economic and social uncertainty for a decade due to the prospect of Pebble's development. BBNC has long advocated that EPA place reasonable restrictions on the mining of the Pebble deposit to protect water and salmon—prohibit discharges of dredged or fill material associated with mining the Pebble deposit into salmon habitat, prohibit discharges unless it is proven they are not toxic to aquatic life, and prohibit discharges that may result in long-term water management or treatment. We urge EPA to complete the 404(c) process before the end of the year and provide the Bristol Bay region with certainty for the first time since Pebble's discovery and assessment.

Sincerely,

Jason Metrokin  
President & CEO